



# Focus on Complying with Washington's Well Drilling Regulations

For Well Operators

Water Resources Program

## For more information:

Online visit:  
[www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/wrhome.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/wrhome.html)  
– click on wells

To leave a recorded message, call  
1-800-468-0261.

Dept of Ecology, HQ  
Water Resources  
PO Box 47600  
Olympia, WA 98504

**Bellingham**  
Field Office  
1204 Railroad Ave, #200  
Bellingham WA 98225

**Bellevue**  
Northwest Region Office  
3190 – 160th Ave. SE  
Bellevue WA 98008  
(425) 649-7000

**Olympia**  
Southwest Region Office  
PO Box 47775  
Olympia WA 98504  
(360) 407-6300

**Vancouver**  
Field Office  
2108 Grand Blvd.  
Vancouver WA 98661  
(360) 690-7171

**Yakima**  
Central Region Office  
15 W Yakima Ave, #200  
Yakima WA 98902  
(360) 575-2490

**Spokane**  
Eastern Region Office  
N. 4601 Monroe, #202  
Spokane WA 99205  
(509) 329-3400

Ecology's goal is to serve the people of Washington State and to protect the environment. Sometimes, this places us in the role of enforcer of laws and regulations. The goal of enforcement is to help achieve compliance, not punish violators.

When we discover violations, we want to communicate those findings and clearly state what responses are appropriate. Often Ecology does this informally with a phone call, site visit or written notice. This is to identify a potential violation and outline steps to achieve compliance. Ecology may also use a *Notice of Correction*.

**Notice of Correction: an informal notice of a potential violation, typically with needed corrections noted. Please read carefully the dates outlined in the Notice.**

Ecology may issue an *Administrative Order* rather than (or after) a Notice of Correction when the violation is considered serious and prompt action is needed, or when voluntary compliance has not been achieved.

**Administrative Order: a formal requirement to correct a documented violation. An order may be appealed.**

Ecology may issue a *Notice of Penalty*. Penalties are typically issued for serious or repeated violations.

**Notice of Penalty: a formal notice used to impose a monetary fine for a documented violation. A penalty may also be appealed.**

Here are some tips about working with Ecology toward voluntary compliance:

1. **Do** talk to Ecology before problems develop. If you are wondering whether there is a compliance problem, ask us! We are happy to provide assistance to help people operate within the law, stay in business, and protect the environment.
2. **Do** respond when Ecology uses informal methods to encourage compliance. Often the department is seeking historic or background information that will allow us to help find solutions such as proper well construction, permits or other written approvals. Your efforts are taken into consideration when we are trying to decide an appropriate response to a violation.
3. **Do** read any notice Ecology provides to see what we have decided, and what must be done to correct the problem.



4. **Do** contact Ecology as soon as possible to talk about the findings. Ecology's regional offices are listed on the sidebar on page one.
5. **Do** look at the time you are required to respond. If you cannot respond by then, contact Ecology right away. You must request time extensions in writing and provide good reasons for them.
6. **Do** be aware of the contents of your permit and/or license. It is your responsibility to follow the provisions.

#### **What if I don't agree with Ecology's findings?**

Orders and penalties can be appealed to the Pollution Control Hearings Board (PCHB). Procedures for appealing are provided in the order or penalty document.

Remember, you can also request Ecology to reconsider a penalty based on new information you provide, prior to a formal appeal.

Ecology wants to work with you to help correct problems before they impact human health or the environment.